



The International Fancy Guppy Association



Dedicated to Promoting The Fancy Guppy Hobby

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A Thought On Filtration

By Alan Opdyke

Like most of us in the hobby I am always watching my fish and thinking about their environment. Many of my thoughts lead to ideas about changes that I hope will improve the living conditions of the gups which I hope will lead to larger fish. Of course most ideas are just that, ideas, and never get any further. What usually happens is one idea is immediately followed by two or more thoughts about why I cannot do it or make a change.

Early in this calendar year I was thinking about filtration, water movement, and diseases. I get, from time to time, tanks of fish that just hang near the back, will not come to the front and eat, and appear to be clamped. I don't think this is the "clamping disease", as they will come out of it without medication most times by simply stopping all food. What I think is I have somehow caused an ammonia cycle much like all salt water tanks go through when setting up new before the good bacteria gets established and a natural cycle can occur. I noticed this happening with up and coming fish I was feeding heavily and usually right after I had plucked the filter out of the tank and dropped in a fresh one.

I use 10 gallon tanks with Luster medium size round filters. I usually change filters when the bubbles become extremely erratic or almost stop all together. At this point I am convinced these filters which are basically mechanical are now mechanical and biological. The radical change from a heavily "seeded" filter to a fresh one is what I deducted was my problem. Well, the next logical step for me was "Why not have two filters in each tank"? That way I would always have a seeded filter in each tank as long as I never changed them both at one time.

Before picking up the phone with a call to "Wet Thumb" I considered what filters to add. You see, if you ask around at shows and seminar attendees you will find people who will only use some brand of bubble up filter like Luster and some who will only use a sponge filter like the Dirt Magnet. People are very divided on filters as they are on many other things. One thing is for sure, nothing is for sure.

So I decided maybe I could have one of each type in every tank. I then spoke with several people in the hobby I know either on the phone, in person, or by E-mail over the next few months. Remember what I said earlier about nothing is for sure in this hobby of ours. Well, the recommendations from everyone were evenly divided between "that may be a good idea" to "I would not do that".

Well I did give it some serious thought as the whole process requires another air valve to be installed in my main air lines for each of the sixty tanks and, of course, another filter for each tank. I ordered more valves and sponge style filters and over the next couple months got all 60 tanks changed to two filters, one Luster and one sponge.

The advantages for my setup are:

- 1) I can change filters without upsetting the bacteria cycle.
- 2) I have not had fish hang in the back or clamp up.
- 3) I have increased the water circulation and oxygen to surface exposure.
- 4) Instead of just bleeding air off from my 1/8-hp blower I am using it!

This is just a thought I wanted to pass on. It may work for you and it may be something you wouldn't even consider. It is working for me and I am happy with the change.

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Filtration



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